



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

maps. By A. G. Kohl; and a Wall-map of Palestine. By C. Hergt. Both presented by Sir R. I. Murchison, K.C.B., President. A Map of the Railways in and around London. By M. Vigers. Purchased. A Map of the North-Polar Basin, showing the track of Whalers, from the year 1777. By A. Petermann. A Map of the Arctic Regions, between Spitzbergen and Greenland, showing the tracks of the whale-ships from the year 1671 to 1868. By A. Petermann. A Map of a portion of Eastern Turkestan, showing the route of Ssewerzow and Osten-Sacken in 1867, from Issyk-Kul to Kaschgar. By A. Petermann.

Dr. R. J. MANN read the following paper:—

*Journal of an Excursion to the Mouth of the Limpopo.* By  
ST. VINCENT ERSKINE.

(Abstract.)\*

MR. ERSKINE states, at the commencement of his journal, that he heard of Herr Mauch's proposal to penetrate Africa from south to north, when engaged on service some hundred miles from Pietermaritzburg, the capital of the colony. He forthwith determined to employ eighteen months' leave of absence in an attempt to explore the course of the Sabia and Limpopo rivers, and offered himself to Carl Mauch as a companion upon his northward start. He left Pietermaritzburg, to carry out this purpose, on the 6th of May, 1868, and crossed the Drakenbergen, and the Vilge and Orange rivers in a transport wagon, to which he had attached himself. In this conveyance he reached Potchefstroom, the most important town of the Transvaal Republic, after some days of slow travelling, and then found his way thence to Pretoria, by another trading wagon. He remained at Pretoria, the guest of Mr. Lys, a well-known English merchant of the place, for three weeks, and then passed on to Leydenburg, a distance of about 100 miles, with Mr. Lys, in one of his wagons. He remained at Leydenburg, at the residence of Mr. M'Laughlan, for about a week, in consultation with Herr Mauch, and employed a portion of his time in practising instrumental observations. He satisfactorily determined the longitude and latitude of Leydenburg as 31° 30' E. longitude, and 25° 4' S. latitude.

From Leydenburg Mr. Erskine travelled in two days and a half in one of Mr. M'Laughlan's wagons along the course of the Umchla-

---

\* Prepared by Dr. Mann from Mr. Erskine's original journals in the possession of the Society.

singwana River to Trigaardt's Farm, in latitude  $24^{\circ}02$  s. He remained here until he could succeed in engaging eight Kaffirs, as bearers; and with these, and a native servant, Adam, who had come on with him from Natal, he again started on the 13th July, purposing first to make his way to Umzielas, the paramount chief of the Bembe or Limpopo country; this chieftain's ordinary residence being at the confluence of the Lipaluli and Limpopo rivers. In three days he reached the summit of the Drakenberg, and looked down upon a broad plain, with the Umchlas River winding through it like a silver thread. He descended the mountains by a very broken fissure in immense red cliffs, and reached Imperani's kraal, or native village, the same evening. At this place he made his first acquaintance with the Knob-nosed Kaffirs, who pinch the skin of the face into a series of small knobs, about the size of peas, arranged in a line down the centre of the forehead and nose. The women adopt additional rows of knobs across the cheek-bones and the upper lip. Mr. Erskine states that these people have now associated themselves with the Maugage and Umzeila tribes, and are becoming extinct as a distinct clan. At this place he also saw the first specimen of the dreaded Tsetse fly.

At Imperani's place he added another bearer to his retinue, and moved forward again on the 17th of July. His course now lay over a flat unvarying country covered with bush, with sandstone, conglomerate and quartz rock cropping out abundantly. On the Umtasiti River, a clear crystal stream, he found a beautiful white quartz reef, of the same description as those observed by Mauch in the gold district of the Shashi River. Near to this spot he saw the first giraffe. The country now swarmed with game up to the Sorghabiti River. He noted the giraffe, eland, buffalo, koodoo, zebra, brindled gnu, bastard hartebeeste, and large and small bush-pig. He also remarked an altogether unknown species of large black pheasant, or Koran. Near the Sorghabiti River he shot a giraffe which measured 11 feet 3 inches from the tip of his tail to the point of his shoulder, and 16 feet 5 inches from the toe of his fore-foot to the top of his horns. His extreme length from tail to nose was 19 feet. As, however, he found by this experiment that it was extremely difficult to get his Kaffirs to move on from meat, and as he had neither time nor goods to waste, he determined to shoot as little as possible for the future. Some distance further on he found the channel of the Imbabati River, dried up into a series of small pools, and then entered a district of "open forest," consisting of large trees devoid of undergrowth. In latitude  $23^{\circ}29'$  s. he came to Imbondune's kraal. This chief gave him some tchualla,

or native beer, and some dry meal, which made him exceedingly ill, and which he believes to have been in some degree poisonous. The chief forbade his people to sell food, and endeavoured to instigate Mr. Erskine's men to desert him. From this place Mr. Erskine communicated with a white trader on the Limpopo River,—Mr. Reeves,—by messenger, and received from him some supplies of flour, coffee, pepper, and dried vegetables. At Imbondune's kraal Mr. Erskine left his man Adam in charge of his goods, and proceeded alone for 40 miles, until he found three Kaffirs, who undertook to return for the baggage. The next day he sighted the Lipaluli River, bordered by highish ground, and in the evening bivouacked upon its banks in the midst of game. The following morning he crossed the stream, with the water up to his arm-pits, and at a spot where he estimated it to be 200 yards wide. The entire country now proved to be well cultivated and thickly inhabited. He soon reached a kraal, where he found it necessary to wait six days for the arrival of his bearers in charge of his baggage. When they came up he paid them off, as this was the limit of their engagement. On examining the baggage it appeared that Adam had abstracted some 25 lbs. of beads, most probably under the influence of the importunity and threats of the natives.

Mr. Erskine arranged with the chief of this kraal to accompany him on to Manjobo's place, some two and a-half days' distance down the river. As he could not start for four or five days, Mr. Erskine employed himself with observing, and had to read his instruments by the fitful glare of fires, kept fed during his work. He fixed the confluence of the rivers Lipaluli and Limpopo, however, with tolerable accuracy, in  $23^{\circ} 34'$  s. latitude, and  $33^{\circ} 40'$  E. longitude. The almost constant prevalence of cloud was a great obstacle. He could only get two reliable meridian altitudes. He records that the predominant winds had been either south-east or north-west. The mean of several observations for the temperature of the air gave  $73^{\circ}$  at nine in the morning,  $77^{\circ}$  to  $82^{\circ}$  at noon, and  $88^{\circ}$  at three o'clock in the afternoon. The temperature of the water, at the confluence of the rivers was  $64^{\circ}$ . His observations for the variation of the compass during the route gave N.  $22^{\circ}$  W., and N.  $22^{\circ} 30'$  W. He estimated these observations within thirty minutes of possible error.

Near the confluence of the river Mr. Erskine caught some remarkable fish, weighing each about 3 lbs., and measuring 18 inches in length. He also bought from the natives two kinds of fish, seemingly of the *Silurus Glanis*. The *Silurus Glanis*, and the ordinary "scale-fish" of Natal were abundant in the rivers. An exact and

detailed account of the unascertained species is appended to the journal.

Mr. Erskine's narrative of his progress from the confluence of the rivers is given in the following words :—

“The chief at last presented himself, with men, and we started towards the middle of the day. After leaving the river some 4 miles away, we skirted along the lake called Lifugwee, about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  mile long, and 1000 yards broad, fringed with reeds, but presenting a fine open sheet of water in the centre, frequented by sea-cows, alligators, and fish innumerable. I believe the path thus far trends towards Umzeilas's kraal, the paramount chief on the U'Sabia River; according to the natives, some fifteen days' walk northwards from this.

“We soon after regained the bank of the river, passed along it for some four or five miles, and, much to my disgust, had to stop at a kraal which is situated on a rise of about 150 feet above the river, and about 1000 yards from the bank. The surrounding country can be well surveyed from this slight elevation, and the Bembe seen meandering its way in the distance, until lost to view in the high trees along its banks, but by which from their brighter verdure it may be traced for some miles further. Next morning my men refused to go on, but, with persuasion, threats, and the influence of their chief, slight though it was, they were at last induced to start. The custom or law is to pay your bearers beforehand, so that you are completely at their mercy. That night, after a very hard walk, we arrived at Injobo's kraal, passing on the way through very thick bush.

“On our arrival I found a difficulty in getting food, but at last procured sufficient for that night. As usual, my blankets were put down under the nearest tree, of which two or three are generally left standing in each kraal, and I slept as only weary men can sleep.

“On awakening next morning, what was my dismay to find that all my bearers had deserted, leaving me still two days' journey from Manjobo's, the place agreed upon. I had paid these men my last salempore and large blue beads; the remainder of my goods being almost worthless, consisting of fine blankets and some 40 lbs. weight of small beads and files. I tried to hire men, but could not; and the owner of the kraal refused to take charge of my things, until, on my saying I would leave them whether or not, he agreed to keep them for a day or two, until I could hire men to return for them. Luckily my friend Macigimana had persuaded one man to stay, so that with the help of his two small sons, the man and my

own servant, I was enabled to carry my sextant, horizon, blanket, pot, and a few goods.

"That day we passed through a country where the bush began to get stunted and scattered, and slept at some kraals on the Benjane River, a small, stagnant stream about 20 miles in length, and after crossing this two or three times, the next day I saw its embouchure into the Bembe, and soon afterwards arrived at Umhamba's kraal.

"The chief, Macigamana, stayed at a kraal (Matomse's) on the road, and did all in his power to induce me to do likewise, but no persuasion would prevent my going on, so that although my servant almost refused to accompany me, until I used threats of dreadful violence, and notwithstanding that I could get no one to show me the way, I shouldered what goods I could, looked up Adam, and started; but after walking about two hours, I employed a man whom I met to carry some of my burden, and point out the road to Manjobo's, where we arrived about five o'clock, P.M.

"I went down to the river and had a delicious bathe, bought some boiled maize for supper, and went to bed. Next morning Macigamana sent to ask me to wait for him, as he was coming. I employed the interval in taking observations for longitude, and for variation of the compass, as the day was a superb one, with both sun and moon in view.

"About noon we started along the banks of the river, and after three hours' walk came to Manjobo's, passing on the way signs of old kraals, like "fairy rings," denoting the existence at one time of kraals at this spot, about half way between the two kraals of Umhamba and Manjobo. I afterwards ascertained that these kraals were formerly the residence of the late chief Shosonga, father of Manicose, whose place is laid down in Hall's map, but incorrectly.

"Manjobo is the commander of the forces for this district. Umzeila the chief being afraid that his precious life might be forfeited by such close proximity (as 250 miles) to the Amaswazi, has removed himself some 16 days further off, and naturally his subjects here, at such a distance from the seat of Government, display all the characteristics of the savage, who is only kept under decent control by the immediate vicinity of a strong hand, and the fear of severe punishment.

"The history of Umzeila, is, perhaps, worth relating here. He is not the rightful heir to the throne; Maswerwa, his elder brother, having succeeded his father Shoshonga. After reigning some four or five years, the people got tired of the *mild* form of government he had adopted, of killing all the men unfit, from age or otherwise, for going to battle, and the young ones naturally thought, that

on his not finding any more old, he would begin on the young men, and as Umzeila had made one or two nearly successful attempts to dethrone Maswerwa, the nation invited him to accept the throne. After obstinate resistance on the part of Maswerwa, he was deposed, and fled to the Amaswazi tribe, who rendered him assistance on three different occasions to regain his throne. On the third attempt, so many of the allies perished from thirst and sickness, that the Amaswazi refused him any further aid, and soon afterwards he was obliged to fly, and now lives in the Amaswazi country resigned to his fate.

“Umzeila, on his brother assuming the chieftainship, had fled, to avoid the usual practice of putting to death those who may furnish a successor to, or claimant for, the throne, and conscience being a thing unknown in Kafirland, hired himself to the Dutch, some say as a slave-hunter, but, I think, more likely as an ally, to do the ‘dirty’ work of sundry hunters and traders, when they suffered at the hands of surrounding tribes. Doubtless immense numbers of children and women were taken on these expeditions; the girls the Kaffirs retained, the boys and cattle going to their employers.

“By these means Umzeila trained and collected an army of some two thousand men, inured to war and hardship, and encouraged them in keeping up a harassing contest with their neighbours, thereby combining much profit to the Boers with amusement to themselves. Therefore, with the assistance of even a minority of the tribe, he could have succeeded in gaining the throne. Since then enmity between the two tribes has existed, the subjects of one not daring to intrude on the territory of the other, and the country on their boundaries is depopulated for about four days’ walk. Umzeila, remembering the tricks of his former allies, is very suspicious of any thing or person connected with the South African Republic. Mr. Struben, having gone from Zoutpansberg to his kraal to trade, was suspected of being a Dutch spy, and received such bad treatment that he lost all his goods, his donkeys died on the homeward journey for want of guides to point out water, and he perished some few weeks after his return, owing to exposure, hardship, and fever.

“On my arrival at Manjobo’s, I heard that some white men were at the ‘Amanzi Umhlopi,’ or white water, and that they intended to come to the Bembe. After trying in vain for four days to persuade Manjobo to give me some men on hire to return for my things, I went back to find my friend Macigamana, and induce some men to accompany me to Injobo’s—I found him at Matouse’s kraal. My servant Adam here complained of head-ache, and fearing

it was fever, I allowed him to remain, and went some thirty miles up the river, with four men, to Injobo's. On my arrival there I heard that the white people had reached the Bembe, and were some three hours' walk distant. Thinking it might be Mr. Sanderson, I determined to go to them. Having sent my things on, I started for Umlangani's kraal, where these men were, and on my arrival found them to be Messrs. Wood and Dubois Brothers, from Natal. I was most glad of this, as it went against the grain to have to share the discovery, which I felt certain that I should make, with any one, although I should have felt it my duty to do so. They kindly gave me the goods I wanted, and I started on my return. On my arrival at Matouse's, I found that Adam had not only paid the men double their allowance, but, as on the former occasion, had helped himself to goods, and spent them unnecessarily. As I had paid for his food during my absence, this was beyond human endurance; I therefore thrashed him, and he ran away. As I was obliged to be back at Umlanjani's within nine days from starting, I could not wait, so gave directions that he should follow; and left alone, as I could not hire any bearers, the chiefs being adverse to my proceeding, I shouldered waterproof sheet, goods, ammunition, gun, pistol, sextant, &c., and some honey I had purchased, about 45 lbs. weight in all, and started for Manjobo's. In three hours I reached Umhamba's, where I rested, and after carrying this burden about two hours longer, I overtook a man proceeding in the same direction, who, for a consideration, consented to bear part of my load to Manjobo's, which I reached an hour afterwards. As my servant did not come with the goods deposited at Matouse's kraal that night, I started early next morning, leaving as much as possible behind; notwithstanding which I suppose I carried some 50 lbs. weight.

"The country here loses its thick, bushy appearance, becomes grassy and open, with here and there euphorbia, and a few vegetable-ivory trees,<sup>1</sup> very similar in appearance to cocoa-nut trees; I walked all that day with only honey for food, and towards evening reached an immense bend in the river, extending north-easterly for about 6 miles; I therefore inquired the way to the sea, and was told that it crossed the river. On hailing one of the 'Dug-outs,' and after being kept waiting about four hours, I was condescendingly ferried across in this fearfully rickety machine, half full of water, for a few heads. I bought some sweet potatoes, and that night was taken to the petty chief living there to sleep. In passing along the river I was surprised at the countless number of crocodiles infesting it; on one little sandy island some fifty



feet in diameter, I counted no less than fifty large, besides numberless small ones, and on this account, although the river is fordable in some places, with water about 4 feet deep, canoes are used. About 4 miles further down is the limit of the tidal rise.

“Next morning I engaged a man to carry my things to the sea, making his chief a present, and paying him in advance, although on starting I did not feel much elated at having procured this assistance, for I noticed that the man omitted to take his rug with him, and, therefore, I might expect to be deserted at any moment. After proceeding about a mile or two he put the things down and asked for more payment, and on my refusal to comply with his request, left them on the ground and walked off. I put the best face I could on the matter, and shouldering the whole of the things went on, trying to dispel dull feelings and angry thoughts by whistling a tune, but am afraid it was a miserable failure.

“I trudged on that day, asking the natives I met, in the little broken Kaffir I could muster, if I was going right, and was generally answered, ‘Yes; that the sea was three days’ walk.’ About two o’clock in the day I came to some very large kraals, which I was informed were the chief’s, that he was over the river, and that I must wait for the boat. I waited for some time, but whenever I approached a boat the ferryman immediately pushed off; therefore, seeing that I was to be detained that night on this side, I made an effort to continue my journey without crossing the river, but soon returned, as the natives insisted that the road to the sea was on the other side of the river.

“I had great difficulty in buying food, as my stock of goods was low, and the natives, as usual, profited by the occasion of a lone white man being in their power, not actually to rob by force, but to starve his goods out of him. I therefore contented myself with some sweet potatoes and a fowl.

“I held a grand consultation with all the councillors, and they agreed in stating that I should sleep four days on the road before I reached the sea; consequently, as I had only one ring of brass wire left with which to provide myself with food, I decided to return next morning.

“Here, as also at Manjobo’s, the natives were surprised at my white face and hands: ‘This is a white man,’ they said; ‘the Portuguese call themselves white, but they are red’ (imbomvu). I told them my body was whiter than my face: ‘Take off your clothes and shew us,’ said they; but I told them that white men did not take off their clothes in public, but I would show them my chest, at which they were much surprised and delighted,

and said my skin was 'very pretty.' I would infer from this that they had never seen a truly white man before, and that therefore the statements of certain Dutch Boers and hunters of visiting this country are not true; and that, with the exception of those natives who had been at Delagoa Bay and Inhambane, they had never seen a European before. They told me it was four days' walk to Delagoa Bay, or Umvuma, as they call it, at the mouth of the Umkomagazi River, the Umkomati of the Boers, and Manhissa or Manicose of the Portuguese. They have still another name for the river here, 'Meti,' which adds one more to the list, Limpopo, Kro-Kodil, Ouri, or Bembe; and, as my observations seem to point out that the Inhampura River's mouth is the outlet, therefore the list would be still further increased. In ancient geography the river is called 'Spirito Santo.'

"Next morning I started on my return, accompanied by two men, I suppose as guards, to prevent my dodging down the river, and accomplished the same journey down in one day which I had taken two for on a former occasion. Neither of these men would carry a single article for me. I was as poor as an 'Umfugazaan,' which is here a more heinous sin than it is in Europe. I was no 'Inkosi;' I was not 'even a rich man; and could they, the King's messengers, be expected to carry things for an "Umfugazaan"?' This was the invariable reply when I asked them to relieve me of some of my load.

"Two days afterwards I got to my friends Wood and Dubois, with the intention of abandoning my purpose if one of them would not accompany me, as I found that I could not get on from want of bearers and my inability to speak 'Zulu,' the language of the country, and to the contempt and suspicion with which they regarded a white man carrying his own things in pursuit of an object which to them seemed so absurd. I heard from Wood that McLachlan and Ash, who had been so kind to me in Leydenberg, were about three hours' walk from the river, trading. As all the assistance they could give me had been rendered, they advised that I should see McLachlan and get his help. They said also that Robert Dubois, having gone to Manjobo's in consequence of the reports I had brought, would perhaps, from his great knowledge of the language, obtain some information upon which I could act. I therefore went over to McLachlan, and he advised me on no account to give up my object, thereby wasting the expense, trouble, and anxiety to which I had been put, and that he had ascertained that the sea was only five days' walk from where we were, and therefore not more than two from where I had turned back. He generously

allowed me to hire two of his men, and, as they did not know me, stood security for the (to them) handsome payment of five blankets each for the trip down and back. He gave me all the goods I wanted, and treated me with the generosity for which he is well known. Allow me here to record my thanks to him, and also to the two Dubois and poor Wood, whose death will be mentioned, for the kindness shewn to me by them—

‘A friend in need is a friend indeed,  
And few there be that find one.’

“I returned the next morning to Umlanjane’s, and heard from Mr. Edmund Dubois that Manjobo had sent to enquire of my whereabouts, and, on being told I was returning homewards, said ‘It is well.’ Dubois seemed to interpret this into a threat; but after consulting McLachlan, I determined to proceed.

“After a walk of about 70 miles, I reached Manjobo’s for the third time, and there found Messrs. Robert Dubois and Ash. I consulted with Dubois, and got him to interpret to Manjobo and explain the object of my journey; but he still refused his permission to my proceeding, and said that if I went it would be bad for me. Dubois asked what he meant. He said, ‘Oh! he will not be killed; but he will be lost, and you will hear no more of him.’ I continued my journey, notwithstanding.

“Near this kraal I saw a large herd of about thirty sea-cows. I would not shoot any, as the Kaffirs who had treated me so badly would have reaped the benefit. Dubois shot one, which came to the surface about 8 o’clock, two hours after being killed. He and some thirty Kaffirs and myself adjourned to the river. Dubois, having just recovered from fever, did not like going in, and until I led the way no Kaffirs would go and drag him out, for fear of alligators. After being shamed into it, some followed me.

“On leaving Manjobo’s the country is still open and thickly inhabited near the river, and on the few streams flowing into it. The soil is of the richest alluvial, and produces every variety of ‘native’ food, principally maize, sorghum, sweet potatoes, yams, sugar-cane, bananas, and several varieties of beans, as well as tobacco of a better growth, and more carefully cultivated than a great deal I have seen grown in Natal by Europeans. The leaves are enormously large and round, and they understand the practice of ‘nipping’ off the blossoms to give greater strength to the leaves, ‘hand-weed’ and hoe it continually.

“I think I omitted to mention that the sands of the river contain numbers of small white shells about as large as a ‘silver penny,’

of the cockle species, more numerous from Manjobo's to Sidudu's than elsewhere: I have no idea whether these were fresh or salt-water shells, but from the uniform level of the country, and the fact that I saw somewhat similar shells beyond the limit of brackish water, I should judge that either the tide had at one time ascended further up the river, or that the sea covered this tract of country, and that these were marine shells.

"I also observed at Isingfungatane's kraal, though in fresh water, a description of periwinkles on pieces of old timber and canoes.

"I much regret not having brought back some of the small 'cockle-shells;' but after having collected some, I threw them away, intending on my return journey to get a few, but owing to anxiety, starvation, exhaustion, and fever, my thoughts were more directed to the preservation of my life than to the evidences of geological formations.

"While I am on the geological subject, though no geologist myself, I think I may venture to state that the country is of recent formation, from the fact of the existence of the shells referred to being found at considerable depths below the surface, and from the existence of the sandstone that is found on the 'bluff' at Port Natal, on the sea-shore and at Umhamba's. I observed this stone generally presenting a flat surface, full of holes and depressions, and although hard, being rotten and porous.

"With reference to the appearance of the country higher up and along the course of the Lipaluli, or Oliphant's River, I think it may be referred to an older formation, as amygdaloid, quartzose rock, and iron-stone present themselves above the ground, more especially about the Sorghobiti River.

"I think at one time the ocean must have covered this country, from the generally sandy nature of the surface and the worn appearance of some of the rocks; but I also remarked that the ironstone had been little affected by anything, except what might be ascribed to atmospheric causes.

"To return to my weary journey, I arrived at Siduda's kraal about one o'clock in the day. He kept me waiting about one and a half hour before he condescended to appear. His first words were—'I am a chief, I am the great chief Siduda, a Bonguni (direct descendant from the "Zulus"), I speak only through presents (Harkerlê).' This was not a pleasant reception, and his subsequent conduct was in accordance with it.

"I gave him a present, and explained my object to the best of my ability, as neither of the men I got from MacLachlan could under-

stand English or much of my indifferent Zulu, as they were either of Mangages or Umgage's tribe.

"The chief himself spoke pure Zulu, which enabled me to understand and explain things after a fashion. I told him that Ash wanted to buy ivory, and that if he sent for him with a note from me he would come. He replied, 'Yes, that was a good proposition; that my two men must go with a note, and I must remain until they returned, and that he would send a messenger to Manjobo to see why I had no one from him.'

"Now, knowing that Manjobo was against my going on, I determined, at all hazards, to get to the sea before he could be communicated with, as I knew my fate if he once heard that I was determined to go on. I therefore replied that it was impossible, because if Ash came, I wished to shoot hippopotami (*Imvubu*) with him, and I could not do so if I had to go to the sea then. Siduda insisted on his proposal; I at once started, but my two men refused to follow. I, therefore, was once again alone without bearers or instruments, and but few goods; but with a stout heart I set out. I was followed by about fifty natives, who poked sticks in my face and otherwise tried to hinder me: at last one caught hold of my gun, which was on my shoulder; I could not shorten my grip soon enough to deal a blow, as the 'swarm' was rapidly closing on me, I therefore drew my revolver, which I had before luckily explained to them, as having five men's lives at its disposal: on its appearance they left my gun and kept their distance and soon after left; but I had not proceeded far before I was again followed, and told that Siduda would give me a man to go to the sea if I would return. I therefore made them go in front, and did so. Luckily I kept a sharp eye on their movements, for as the path led through a fence of reeds, I observed them, through the chinks here and there, clustered and stooping behind it ready to pounce on me.

"Seeing this I passed through another opening some 10 yards behind them, and until I turned and laughed at them they were unaware of my whereabouts, but as intent as ever with their hands all ready for a pounce. They all came away like dogs with their tails between their legs, amidst the derisive shouts of the old men and councillors assembled under a tree hard by.

"I was requested to sit down amidst the throng, but I asked that all might sit in front of me, as I had already experienced their attentions: this was received with laughter. I was then shown the man who was to go with me; but, knowing their lying propensities, I scarcely looked at him, beyond seeing that he was a councillor, and therefore not likely to serve as a guide.

"My two men, who had in the mean time started homewards, were sent for, but only one returned, almost by force, and the other was considerably expedited in his retreat.

"I imagined that these men had been persuaded to run away, and that the one was made to return; I, therefore, told the chief that Ash would not come unless I wrote, and that the runaway would only be punished for his cowardly and treacherous conduct by his master. He therefore proposed that my servant should go, together with a messenger from him, and that I should be supplied with a man to go to the sea. I wrote the note, and next morning I went one way and my servant another; again being without anyone accountable for my safety.

"But little did I care, when the accomplishment of the object of my journey burst upon my view, through an opening between two sand hills, looking like caps of snow in the distance. Between those hills ran the Bembe River, and on the other side was its mouth.

"I felt capable of undergoing anything at that moment, forgetting the solitude, sickness, and despair I had suffered; forgetting that I was at the mercy of the savages, and that I had to walk 600 miles before I should again behold 'home, sweet home.'

"Those only who have suffered the same hardships can appreciate that yearning for civilised society, and the dread of passing again through the trials and dangers I had experienced.

"I slept at Isinfungatane's kraal, on the southern side of the river, and recrossed again next morning. After going along the bank and passing through part of the 'fen' I had waded through for four hours on the previous day, I crossed three small streams, left the immediate bank of the river, and began to ascend the Umtshan-tshan hills, to avoid a large marsh which is impassable, and stretches from this point to the hills bordering the sea, and on each side of the river for about 5 miles.

"There is a great change of the country here—fine grassy hills dotted with clumps of bush and views of the sea-range in the distance, displaying the bare sand in places. The soil of these hills is red, and much like the soil of some of the coffee-land at Natal, on the coast. I observed in the valleys below small clear fresh-water lakes, and here and there a marsh, with papyrus-rush rearing its fine hairy head to a height of 10 feet, from stems as large as my arm.

"To the right was the marsh I was skirting, stretching for about 5 miles to the river, and beyond to some hills, under which flowed the Inculuzane River, which discharges itself into the Bembe,

within 3 miles of the sea. I ascended a rise, and the Kaffir said, ('There is the sea,' 'Nantzi Luanhla.') I then passed through thick bush which borders the coast, and arrived at the Indian Ocean.

"As it was only about 4:30 P.M., I wished to go at once along the beach to the mouth of the river, which I judged was about eight miles to the southwards, but my bearer and guide would not accompany me; I therefore told him to await my return, and started alone. I did not get along very fast, from the steepness of the beach, which left little hard sand. About 6 o'clock, seeing a path through the bush, I climbed up, hoping to obtain a view of the country, but found it only led to some temporary fishing-huts, and seeing evidences of habitation I determined to stop there for the night. I tried to penetrate further, but found it impossible from the density of the scrub. The Kaffirs returned meanwhile with some water they had been to get at the lakes referred to, and also of shell-fish, which they had collected, consisting of 'sea-eggs,' mussels, and several other kinds. They gave me water, and in return I gave them some 'stamped' maize (u'parsula), and we three made our frugal supper off the shell-fish, roasted on the embers, and the maize, with 'Adam's ale,' which had been my drink for the last few months.

"Next morning, before sunrise, I got under weigh, and walked for nearly three hours without reaching the river, and, seeing some natives coming down to the beach in the distance, I beckoned them to approach. On their arrival I asked where the 'Bembe' was, and they said 'There,' pointing a mile or so on. I certainly saw a faint black line; but was so convinced that this river could not enter the sea in so insignificant a manner that I employed one to show it to me. He went about 500 yards into a small rise of sand amidst the surrounding waste, and pointed out the lagoon and mouth of the river, which was now plainly before me. He then turned back and left. A few moments after, I stood gazing on the long-sought mouth of the Limpopo or Bembe River. The thought crossed me, Is it worth while to have gone through so much to get so little?

"A stream of about 300 yards wide (at full tide) flowed into the ocean; and, although it was not rough inshore, I noticed the sea breaking some 3 miles out, not in one roller, as on a bar, but in a succession of small breakers, until it reached the shore; thereby, I think, demonstrating that though no marked sand-bar existed, there was great shallowness of water outwards for about 3 miles. Whether or not channels exist through this sand, I am unable to judge, having had no means of ascertaining the fact.

"I waited until noon for observations. As the horizon was obscured to the northwards by land, and, as already mentioned, the loss of my mercury prevented me from using an artificial one, I was obliged to take a back observation for latitude, and prevented altogether from taking the longitude.

"As the coast-line has been pretty accurately laid down by abler hands than mine, and with better appliances than I could have used, I do not much regret my being prevented from taking a longitude; and having settled satisfactorily the latitude by a 'reduction to the meridian' and a 'meridian altitude,' it will only be necessary to state that the mouth of the Limpopo River is situate on the eastern coast of Africa, in latitude  $25^{\circ} 15' 09''$  s., as determined by a meridian altitude, or by a reduction to the meridian (an approximate method),  $25^{\circ} 15' 29''$  s., and about the 34th parallel of east longitude. The shore on the northern side of the river is a flat of loose sand, evidently overflowed by the river occasionally in summer, and perhaps by the sea at spring-tides. More to the north, up the coast, high sand-dunes, in some places clothed with scrub almost to the summit, and in others in their naked dreariness, appear. The sandy ridges and bare patches give the appearance of snow when seen at a distance inland. There is a lagoon about one mile wide and five miles long, and a channel about 100 yards *long* connects it with the ocean.

"I bathed in the mouth of the river, but on account of alligators and the feeling that if I was lost no account could be given of my expedition, as I was alone, prevented me from going further than where the water reached my chin. This was about 20 yards from the shore, and at that point there was evidently a deep channel, as the bottom shelved so sharply that I could hardly stand. This was at low tide. Before I left the tide ebbed, and I much regret not being able to see the place at high-water.

"I retraced my steps, and found my man awaiting me. I slept on the shore that night, and made Isingfugatane's kraal next day. This kraal being on the southern side of the river, I was obliged to cross; and, as it was raining, no Kaffirs could be seen outside their huts, neither could they be brought to the river by shouting. I therefore told the bearer to swim across for the boat, but he refused, and said, 'There are alligators who bite men.' I then jumped in and swam across, as it would have been certain death to have remained in wet things all night. I found the river far out of my depth from bank to bank, and until then was unaware of the weak state I was in. I could hardly reach the opposite shore, though the distance was only about 300 yards. My clothes were half-dried



during the night, and I reached Siduda's next day. Here I found my servant, who had been with the messenger with the note for Ash. He had returned before my messenger got to Manjobo's, and therefore he had not seen him."

Mr. Erskine now commenced his return. His first rest was at a kraal three hours' walk up the river, at a spot marked as the highest point of the stream reached by the tide. He here purchased a single meal for a blue handkerchief, and then travelled on, with the severe headache indicating incipient fever, to Umlangane's kraal, a distance of 140 miles, which he accomplished in nine days, having walked eleven hours at a stretch on two successive days. He found that McLachlan and Dubois had left the place, the former going to the south-west, and having the large gun, clothes, and artificial horizon with him. Dubois had gone to the south-east, and had left messages that whatever was promised along the route in his name should be certainly paid. Mr. Erskine therefore followed in his track. He stayed a day at Umlangane's kraal, and on the third day overtook Dubois's party at Umchahela's kraal. Both the Dubois were here prostrate with fever, and incapable of the slightest exertion. Five Kaffirs were in the same condition. One of the Dubois was also suffering injuries inflicted by the charge of a buffalo. The four helpless men remained in this pestilential spot a week, and then managed to crawl on painfully 4 miles. On the next day they made 6 miles, and reached some kraals, where they rested four days. They then travelled 20 miles in two days, and again halted at kraals five days. During this halt Mr. Erskine made his first and last lion hunt, which must be described in his own words:—

"Moved by the report that two or three lions had been seen, and that one was not far off, I shouldered my gun, and was joined by a host of Kaffirs, who made such a noise that few lions would have faced them. The clamour, however, grew by degrees small and beautifully less the nearer we approached to the king of beasts, and on arriving within 500 yards the Kaffirs drew up in line and I at last got to the front, which I had been prevented from accomplishing before from my inability to keep pace with them. I had not advanced more than 20 yards when an animal, about the size of a foxhound, sprang up and made off, tail on end, in a dire funk and at a pace which defied pursuit. And this was a 'live lion!' Ill as I was, I threw myself on the ground convulsed with laughter, and shouted to the Kaffirs to 'Catch him alive, O!' They set up a yell, which lent wings to his flight and made him whine with fear."

From this spot the party skirted the eastern side of the Bomba Hills, and in 15 miles reached the Sabia River. They encamped under a large tree on the banks of the river, all the party being extremely weak, although relieved from the paroxysm of fever, and Wood being seriously ill; he sank rapidly in this place, and was buried under a large tree. The survivors were now attacked with dysentery, and had to move on, in most wretched plight, in heavy rains. At the Umgwema River they found temporary shelter in some deserted huts. The Umgwema River joins the Umkomasi on the western side of the Bomba Hills. The Sabia joins the Umkomasi on the eastern side of the hills, itself running through the range. The conjoined Umgwema and Umkomasi pass through the hills at their junction. Another river, the Umlumazi, falls into the Umkomasi a little further to the south. In the absence of the artificial horizon, Mr. Erskine tried several devices in attempting to fix the latitude of these rivers, but failed entirely in consequence of the prevalence of strong wind. From this spot the faint blue outline of the Drakenbergen was visible towards the west. After a short march the party reached the Umlumazi River, and bagged three hippopotami. The stream was infested with crocodiles, which made off with the carcasses of the slaughtered sea-cows in the night. The rain was here almost incessant. The next day the party reached the first kraals of the Amaswazi tribe; the country between this and the Sabia being depopulated in consequence of the state of war existing between the Amaswazi and the Umzeila. It was now forty-five days since the party had tasted farinaceous food, and they were rejoiced at procuring some millet-meal. The inhabitants of these kraals were without cattle. After two days' further march, Edmund Dubois broke down entirely, and had to be carried some distance by his brother, Mr. Erskine, and two Kaffirs. Mr. Erskine writes at this time, "I shall never forget the weight of a quarter of a man, which was my share of the burden. I was so weak that I could not carry my gun, and in fact was so ill that I hardly knew whether I should be able to go on the next day. It was, therefore, not surprising that an additional weight of 40 lbs., and that of a man so weak that he could not stiffen himself to allow of his being carried with ease, should have caused the perspiration to pour from our already reeking bodies, and should have left a sensation of horror in the memory which will not be easily effaced."

Six miserable days were spent at the next resting-place, an Amaswazi kraal, the food consisting of guinea-fowls. The wagon was now four days' walk a-head, and two natives were sent on to it. The Umkomogazi River flows fast past the kraal. The next

day's journey carried the party to Mahorbo's kraal, where Robert Dubois pushed on a-head towards the wagons, to send back supplies to his more exhausted companions. After crossing the Umvoloozi river the wagon was reached; but the rats had eaten all the remainder of the flour, and had destroyed most of the stores, and the clothes were filled with bugs. There was plenty of milk, but this was for the present a forbidden luxury. They now, fortunately, had an abundant supply of the most important medicines. The journey from the Bembe River to this place had occupied thirty-seven days. Mr. Erskine again failed entirely here to get any reliable observations, on account of the prevalence of strong winds. He records that throughout the journey the wind was almost always blowing strongly from the north-west in the morning, and from the south-east in the evening.

The White Umvoloozi, and the Little and Great Usutu, the Ingwempisi, and the Umkonto, which unite on the western side of the Bomba Hills to form the Usutu River, were now crossed in succession; and then the Pongolo, the Ingwavuma being left to the west.

The country drained by these rivers is claimed by the South African Republic, and is well watered and healthy, excepting a tract within 30 miles of the Bomba Hills, which is flat, bush-covered, invested with the Tsetse-fly, abundantly supplied with game, but unhealthy.

The Bomba Hills are composed of sandstone, with blocks of blue granite or whinstone on the top. They are inhabited along the summits; but the eastern side of the hills is marshy and unhealthy. On the western side of the range the Ingwavuma River joins the Pongola, which then runs on into the Usutu, to form what is incorrectly called the Mapoota River, a stream emptying itself into the southern side of Delagoa Bay.

Mr. Erskine now suffered from liver disorder, consequent upon the fever, and became exceedingly weak. He made his way gradually on over the Buvaan River, the head-waters of the Umvoloozi, and then happily crossed the Buffalo River into Natal territory.

Mr. Erskine thus concludes his simple narrative of bold and brave adventure :—

“The result of my examination of the country to the north and north-east of Natal, is the certainty that in that tract, many times larger than England, there are districts fertile and healthy for man and beast, which can at present hardly be said to be inhabited. The fly would, in all probability, disappear before civilised occupation, and with the game. There are no native tribes which

would seriously oppose the gradual occupation of the land by white men. The country could be reached with facility from Delagoa Bay, or by the Inhambane, and is certainly healthy to within 150 miles of the coast. The Delagoa Bay route is, at the present time, in process of survey, for the Glasgow and South African Company, by my brother Townsend, with a view to opening out their lands situated on the eastern borders of the Amaswazi country. It is most desirable that the territory between the Limpopo and Sabia rivers should be explored, and the Sabia may be navigable. This is the district described by old geographers as Sofala, or Ophir, and Monomotapa—rich in gold.

“Ill news flies apace. Some officious person from the northern frontier rode into Maritzburg, with the intelligence that I had been picked up by a Boer, lying in my blanket in the veldt beyond Zoutpansberg, nearly dead; and my father was about to start in search of me when I walked into his room. He did not recognise me at first. All, however, is well that ends well. I should be entirely willing, notwithstanding all my privations and distress, again to undertake a similar trip; but I would never do so unless properly equipped. I made two grand mistakes, which should be avoided on another occasion. The first was the going without sufficient goods; the second, the travelling in the character of an explorer, rather than in that of a trader. Had I gone in the latter form, I should have had no trouble at all with the natives. My one great advantage was that I was well supplied with medicines. Without these we should possibly all have remained with poor Wood—who, perhaps, after all, has the best of it. My younger brother is so far from being discouraged by my adventures, that he is eager to start at once in my footsteps upon a sporting trip, taking with him as beasts of burden only donkeys, which certainly would prove the best animals a man could have on the Limpopo. I am now a sleek Treasury Clerk, again paying more attention to tare and tret than to latitude and longitude. But, as with Sinbad the Sailor and Robinson Crusoe of happy memory, the spirit of wandering is only laid, not exorcised; and at the call of science I would again place my services, such as they are, at the disposal of the Royal Geographical Society, at whose instigation I undertook the exploration of the Limpopo, Bembe, or Spirito Santo River, thus far virtually accomplished.”

Mr. Erskine's Journal will be published entire, with his Map, in the 'Journal,' vol. xxxix.

The PRESIDENT, in returning the thanks of the Society for this important communication, and to Dr. Mann for having prepared it for reading, said that

the Council had that day agreed to bear a portion of the expenses incurred by Mr. Erskine in his adventurous journey. He added that, after the experience of Mr. Erskine, he could no longer accept the hypothesis that the country along the banks of the Limpopo was the Ophir of Solomon. Unfortunately, the discovery which had been made of the lower course of this great river would have but little interest for merchants, since the shallows at the mouth would prevent its being commercially useful. Many years ago the coast and mouths of this and the other rivers of East Africa were surveyed by Captain Owen.

Dr. MANN said that after the close of the last session of the Society he was enabled, through the kind consideration of the President, to communicate to Mr. Erskine the cordial and material encouragement of the Society for his attempt to trace the lower course of the Limpopo; and it would readily be conceived that it was a great satisfaction to him to have the opportunity of recording Mr. Erskine's success before the close of the present session. The date of Mr. Erskine's start was definitely given in the opening of his journal. The date of his presence at the confluence of the Lipaluli and Limpopo was not recorded in the journal; but it was fixed by a casual memorandum of astronomical observations which was in his (Dr. Mann's) hands. It was curious that all dates are omitted from the concluding portion of Mr. Erskine's narrative; but we were fortunately able to fix, within a very narrow limit, the date of the completion of his expedition. He (Dr. Mann) received a letter from Mr. Erskine's father, bearing date November 17th, 1868, speaking with some anxiety of the last news he had received from the absent traveller; and he received another letter from him, dated November 30th, telling him of the safe and unexpected return of his son to Natal. He therefore completed his journey between the 17th and 30th of November, and was, upon the whole, six months engaged on the work. Mr. Erskine, in starting on his expedition, first made his way, with one personal attendant, by the help of chance lifts in ordinary transport-wagons, drawn by oxen at the rate of some three miles an hour, over the mountain-frontiers of Natal, through the Orange River Sovereignty, to Leydenburg, in the Transvaal Territory. He then again crossed the Drakenbergen in a direct line for the position where the Lipaluli joins the Limpopo. Very soon losing all advantage from wagon transport, either for himself or his heavy impedimenta, the small means that he had provided to meet the charges of assistance from the Kaffirs were soon exhausted; and thenceforth he had nothing to rely upon but the kindness of traders casually encountered at some portions of his journey, and his own firm resolution to reach the mouth of the river. He struck the confluence of the rivers, and descended the channel formed after the confluence to the sea. He then retraced his steps along the main channel of the river, until he came into communication with a small party of traders that were upon its course, and, in company with them, struck across the wild desolate land of the Amamponda and Amaswazi tribes and through the upper corner of Zululand, the whole party being stricken with African fever, almost to death's door, during this fearful march. For some portion of this journey he bore along his own burden of scientific implements and materials for barter—which he hoped to make the means of successful exploration—amounting to nearly 70 lbs. of dead-weight, upon his own shoulders. He started upon this adventurous excursion with a very deficient supply of barter goods for making his way through the Kaffir tribes, and was badly equipped, as a matter of course, under the circumstances, with observing instruments. He found the confluence of the two great rivers; he tracked them to their termination, and made an exact sketch of the country both at the confluence and the mouth; and he then examined the physical situation and relations of certain rivers, the relations of which to the Bomba Hills have been

hitherto misapprehended, and has furnished a very admirable sketch-map of the country he has traversed, which is now in the hands of the Society. So much had Mr. Erskine accomplished: it only remained to add a few words concerning what yet remained to be done. The latitudes of certain positions visited by Mr. Erskine had been well fixed, and he had no doubt these latitudes were worthy of implicit reliance. He had supplied an important correction of the latitude of Leydenburg, and good latitude-observations for the confluence of the rivers and for the mouth of the Limpopo. The longitudes of the confluence and of the mouth of the river required re-examination. The reasons for this were obvious. During all the latter part of his lonely and unaided progress Mr. Erskine was only too fortunate to have been relieved of the grievous incumbrance of his artificial horizon. He used to supply its place by sundry rude devices, such as using the mobile surface of water; but it is, perhaps, on the whole, fortunate that he did not succeed, as the results of such methods of observation would, in all probability, have been more embarrassing than none at all. He would read extracts from a letter which he had just received from Mr. Erskine on this subject:—

“I have always believed that hitherto the weight of opinion has been in favour of the ‘Ouro,’ or Gold River, laid down as Orpen’s, being the mouth of the Limpopo. Orpen, when in Ladysmith on a visit, in 1867, told me that this was the supposed mouth, and that he knew of no one who could identify the river at the sea, or, in fact, further than the confluence of the Lipaluli and the Limpopo. I conclude that this was Orpen the traveller, who gave Hall his information as to the Limpopo, as laid down in Hall’s map. In Dr. Petermann’s last map the positions do not differ materially from mine, except as to the sea approach. I have had to remove Leydenburg more than a degree of latitude and about half a degree of longitude from its place in Petermann’s map. There is but one river of any size hereabouts; and I was informed by the Kaffirs that U’Sabia, the only other large river, flowed into Inhambane, and was about ten days’ walk from the confluence of the Lipaluli and Limpopo. I was also informed by the Kaffirs that the mouth of the Limpopo, which I reached, was five days’ walk from Delagoa Bay to the south, and ten days’ walk from the Inhambane to the north. You now have the crude observations you asked for. Anything more can easily be obtained by an umulunga (white man) now well known to the natives of the Limpopo under the name ‘Maskin’ (*Erskine*), the ‘mad son of the Government.’ You, who have experience of African travel in a comparative paradise, an ox-wagon, can more easily imagine than I can describe the difficulties I had to encounter on foot, without bearers or animals of any kind, amidst hostile tribes, suspicious of an explorer, and determined, if possible, to thwart his object, who know nothing of ‘Somtseu” (the native patronymic of Mr. Shepstone, the Natal Secretary for native affairs), “or what he conceives to be all-powerful Natal. Umselekaze knows us, and other tribes further north know us. But in this fever-stricken and fly-infected country they are ‘know-nothings.’ The latitudes, of course, are absolutely accurate, and the observations for longitude were taken by myself ALONE, and therefore took some twenty-six minutes for each. I lay on my back for the lunar distances, and obtained good ones.”

It will be remembered that no longitude-observation could be made at or near the mouth of the river; and Mr. Erskine himself very cautiously and modestly remarks that he has discrepant results with some of the other longitude observations, and that they therefore require further discussion and repetition. There remains, then, this final fact, issuing from Mr. Erskine’s labours. In the best maps before Mr. Erskine’s expedition, as in Petermann’s, there is a large river-track marked from the confluence of the Lipaluli and the Limpopo to an embouchure lying within the 25th parallel of latitude

on the shore of the Indian Ocean, and marked "Ouri," or "Ouros." Mr. Erskine has shown that the river from the confluence of the Lipaluli and Limpopo does not go to that embouchure, but to a spot lying half a degree to the south of the 25th parallel, and very nearly coinciding with the embouchure of a smaller river marked on the maps as the Inhampure. This then only remains to be done. Means should now be found to send Mr. Erskine up by sea, to identify the spot he reached upon the Indian Ocean, and with the means of re-examining and fixing the longitude with final accuracy. The examination should then be extended to the so-called mouths of the Ouri and the Inhambane, lying a little further to the north, with a view also of finally marking their latitudes and longitudes. Possibly, in doing this, it may be also found practicable to determine what the relation of the U'Sabia to the Inhambane is, and if there be an Ouri as well as an Inhambane, or Limpopo and Inhambane, where that Ouri seems to come from, as it certainly does not come from the confluence of the Lipaluli and Limpopo. It is scarcely possible to doubt that the influence of the Royal Geographical Society, which has begun this work, will be energetically and happily used to accomplish its completion.

There was one matter, of some interest, expressed in the sketch which Mr. Erskine has furnished of the mouth of the Limpopo. He has very exactly shown that curious feature of the South African rivers, the narrow channel of 300 yards breadth leading to a lagoon, or river-expansion above, of a mile wide. A few years since, he (Dr. Mann) crossed the mouths of all the rivers of No Man's Land with Mr. Scott, the Governor of Natal at that period, and every river had exactly the same conformation which is here delineated. A low heap of sand was piled up on the sea-beach almost entirely across the natural mouth of the river, leaving a narrow channel on one side for the tide to scour through; and in every case the channel was on the same side of the sand-bar as that which it holds at the mouth of the Limpopo, namely, to the south. In the season of flood the sand-bar is cleared quite away and the channel opened to the full width. At the termination of the season of flood the bar is again piled up by the sea, and the lagoon reformed. In the smaller rivers the sand-bar extends quite across from side to side during a part of the year, and the water rises higher and higher in the lagoon and along the lower tracts of the channels of the river until it acquires sufficient weight to burst the barrier. It is very interesting thus to find great natural forces marking their identity and proving their uniformity of action through regions of wide geographical extent.

Admiral SIR WILLIAM HALL related that he had the honour of commanding the first iron steamer, the *Nemesis*, which had ever rounded the Cape of Good Hope. Meeting with stormy weather, which nearly broke her in two amidst-ships, the *Nemesis* reached the fine harbour of Delagoa Bay. At that time an American schooner attempted to ascend the Limpopo for the purposes of trade. They crossed the first bar, but were wrecked on the second. The captain and the second mate started on foot for Delagoa Bay, a distance of 60 miles, in order to obtain assistance. On the journey the natives attacked them; the captain was killed and subsequently eaten by these savages, and though the mate was left for dead, he succeeded in rejoining the crew. A vessel was sent round, and rescued the survivors. He could not give too much credit to Mr. Erskine for venturing among the savage inhabitants of that region. With the exception of Simon's Bay, there was no good harbour in our South African possessions; it was therefore much to be desired that the colony should be extended to Delagoa Bay.

Dr. MANN stated that the island of Inyak, at the entrance to Delagoa Bay, was already in possession of the English.

Mr. J. ROBINSON said the colonists of Natal had felt warm interest in the

undertaking of Mr. Erskine. Referring to the alleged discovery of gold-fields in South-Eastern Africa, he said the representations of Karl Mauch, who, in company with Mr. Hartley, had explored the country north of Natal, were thoroughly credited by the colonists, though as yet very little gold had been obtained. Mauch was actuated by the desire that Germany should have its Livingstone, and he had undertaken to make his way through Africa from the Cape of Good Hope to Alexandria. It was his intention to acquire, by a lengthened residence in various parts, such knowledge of the people and the products as might prove of value to the world. He himself, after communicating the intelligence of his discovery of a gold region, left it to others to turn the information to account, considering that his mission was that of an explorer rather than that of an adventurer. Under the influence of his representations, a party was formed in the Transvaal Republic, of eleven men, who proceeded, fully equipped, to the alleged site of the gold-fields. They carried on their operations for a few weeks, but, after disagreeing among themselves, returned with only three ounces of gold and 5 cwt. of auriferous quartz, which has been since found to contain no gold at all. So far from being daunted by this, several other parties have since gone in search of the gold region; but, up to the date of the latest intelligence, no encouraging results have been obtained. Still he had seen, at Port Natal, trinkets made from gold obtained by the natives in the neighbourhood of the Limpopo, and had conversed with people who lived just beyond that river, who had assured him that from remote ages gold works had been carried on there. He did not think the Zulu country deserved the character of unhealthiness which had been given to it. Many who had resided there for years spoke highly of its healthiness and productive capacity. Around the Transvaal Republic the mineral wealth is great, and agriculture is being successfully pursued to some extent. The South-Eastern African states had before them a prospect of prosperity in a social and commercial sense which few people in England at present imagine.

The PRESIDENT, in closing the discussion, announced the termination of the session, and expressed a hope that the next session, to commence in November, would prove equally successful with the one now concluded.

---

## ADDITIONAL NOTICES.

(Printed by order of Council.)

---

- 1.—*Additional Remarks on the Bolor Highland.* By Colonel VENIUKOFF. Read at a Meeting of the Imperial Geographical Society on the 16th December, 1867, and translated by T. MICHELL, Esq.

It is nearly seven years ago since I first directed the attention of the Russian Geographical Society to two extremely curious documents, preserved in the archives of the *état-major* at St. Petersburg, which add to our meagre stock of information respecting the geography of the Bolor, and of the whole country generally between the Syr-Daria and Indus, from the meridian of Khodjent to Kashgar, Yarkend, and the territory of the Maharajah of Cashmere. Although our knowledge of the geography of the Bolor has not advanced during these seven years, yet many explorations have been made in the adjoining countries, while scientific conquests, coincident with political advances, have extended